

Members:
Sen. Greg Server, Chair
Sen. Allie Craycraft
Sen. James Lewis
Sen. Harold Wheeler
Rep. James Bottorff
Rep. Mark Lytle
Rep. Richard Mangus
Rep. Phyllis Pond



NATURAL RESOURCES STUDY COMMITTEE

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MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: August 13, 1998
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St., Room 156-B
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Sen. Greg Server, Chair; Sen. Harold Wheeler; Sen. James Lewis; Sen. Allie Craycraft; Rep. Mark Lytle; Rep. James Bottorff; Rep. Richard Mangus; Rep. Phyllis Pond.

Members Absent: None.

Call to Order. Sen. Server, Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order. After introducing the members of the Committee, he requested a report on silt problems experienced at Lake Shafer and Lake Freeman.

Silt Problems Associated with Lake Shafer and Lake Freeman. Daryl Johns, representing the Shafer-Freeman Lakes Association, provided the Committee with an update on the efforts made to address silt problems at Lakes Shafer and Freeman. To date, three silt traps have been installed, one trap is in the process of being installed, and two traps will be installed in the future. The Association is attempting to acquire land on which to deposit the silt, which consists primarily of sand. If land is acquired, the top soil is scraped off and a hole is dug in which the silt will be deposited. Negotiations are underway for four parcels of land.

The traps are removing silt and will require cleaning every six to eight years. Revenues collected from the imposition of a local county innkeeper's tax will be used to maintain the traps. The knowledge gained from Lakes Shafer and Freeman will be shared with other lake associations that are or will be experiencing similar problems.

The \$2 million appropriation provided by the state will be sufficient to cover the expense of the silt traps. The Association hopes that \$5.5 million in state funds will be available to pay for expenses associated with dredging the lakes.

Crossbow Season. The Legislative Council requested that the Committee study problems associated with the crossbow season. Bill Stuart, Legislative Liaison for Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), explained that hunters could use a crossbow for hunting deer for the first time this year during the late deer hunting season, which was from December 6 through January 4. Crossbows were included with part of the long bow season.

The DNR is not aware of problems with the season at this point; however, he noted that the season was

new. The Department would like a couple more seasons to gather and analyze data on participation rates as well as any violations or problems (or the lack thereof) that occur during the season.

The number of deer killed during the 1998 archery season was down 5% over the previous year. However, the total number of deer killed during all the deer hunting seasons was down 15% from the previous year. Nonscientific data gathered by the DNR indicated that crossbow activity was fairly light; however, the fact that this year was the first year in which crossbows could be used may have influenced participation. The number of deer killed is totaled by type of license. The total number of deer killed by hunters with an archery license (which would include crossbows) was 861. Because there is not a separate license for crossbows, the number of deer killed by a crossbow is not available. The Department will be using surveys to ascertain the activity of the season.

Colonel Larry Allen, Director, Division of Law Enforcement, DNR, noted that the system used to record deer kills was changing and that although crossbow data was not available for last year, it will be available next year. If violations involving a crossbow occur, such violations will be noted. Staff have been informed to notify him if there are crossbow violations. He estimated that fewer than 100 hunters used crossbows.

Gene Hopkins, Indiana Bow Hunters Association, observed that few hunters used crossbows during the season. He indicated that 40 to 60 deer were killed with crossbows. He explained that there was considerable conflict during the rule making process that established the crossbow season. His organization opposed allowing crossbows in the archery season. The Bow Hunters Association does not recognize crossbows as archery equipment. He recalled that proponents of the crossbow indicated that the use of crossbows would generate approximately \$1.3 million in additional license sales. He noted that 40-60 crossbow hunters clearly did not generate the estimated amount of additional revenue. He also noted that inclusion of crossbows did not diminish the deer herd. He advocated the establishment of a crossbow season if enough people wanted to hunt with crossbows. A crossbow license would allow the DNR to track participation and monitor problems.

Phil Ohmit, Hoosier Conservation Alliance, supported the establishment of a crossbow license. He noted that the use of crossbows will probably increase. This year many hunters did not know that there was a crossbow season.

Dick Mercier, Indiana Sportsmen's Round Table, explained that for four years his organization has been advocating that if crossbows are allowed, then a crossbow license should be issued. He recalled that the crossbow manufacturers did not make an effort to sell crossbows until late in the season. For this reason, the low number of deer killed with crossbows was not surprising. He anticipated an increase in the number of hunters using crossbows. The legislature would have to create a crossbow season. The Natural Resources Commission does not have the authority to institute a crossbow season. Archery licenses are \$13.75. Of this amount \$13 goes to the state, and \$0.75 goes to the agent who sold the license.

Changing the Types of Nursery Stock Facilities That Must Be Inspected. Dr. Bob Waltz, Director, Division of Entomology and Plant Pathology, DNR, requested that the Committee consider changing the types of nursery stock facilities that must be inspected. His hope is to require inspections of facilities that pose greater threat of plant disease. For example, he explained that his Division is required to inspect small facilities that may raise herbaceous perennials, such as day lilies. The facility raises the plants from a bare bulb that is purchased from a supplier. The facility might maintain a small growing area that may be ten feet in width and sells the plants to individual customers or grocery stores. Generally, these types of facilities are not set up to ship out of state. No new pests are introduced through this stock. Pests that may be located on the plants are pests that may already reside in the residents' backyards. Nonetheless, these facilities are regulated because they are identified as nurseries. However, the pest risk is minimal.

Other facilities that ship out of state pose a more significant risk. In fact, surrounding states require state inspection before out-of-state shipment. Additionally, nursery stock that comes in from other states also poses greater risk. Inspections assure that the imports do not contain insects that pose a threat to Indiana.

Larry Becker, President of the Indiana Nursery and Landscape Association, supported the proposal, noting that anyone would welcome deregulation. In response to Rep. Pond's question, he noted that private industry has the ability to provide a sufficient number of seedlings needed for reclamation and wildlife habitat restoration throughout the state.

Invasion of the Gypsy Moth. Dr. Waltz explained that the DNR has been monitoring the progress of the gypsy moth for approximately 20 years. The Department has set approximately 13,000 traps to attract male moths to monitor their presence. He noted that the gypsy moth is a serious threat because the moth can defoliate and kill about 500 different types of trees. In Pennsylvania, New England, and Northern Michigan, where gypsy moth infestations have occurred, many miles of deforestation have resulted. The gypsy moth is moving into Indiana. Currently, Steuben County has a population of gypsy moths. The moth may also be infesting sections of St. Joseph and Elkhart Counties. Steuben County has been quarantined, which means inspections are required prior to moving goods outside of the county. The quarantine also requires certain restrictions on the chipping and distribution of bark. One egg mass can contain 500 to 1,000 eggs. Gypsy moth infestations travel at a rate of about 30 miles per year. With intervention, the rate can be slowed to 15 miles per year, assuming that the moth is not transported by any other means. Many moths attach to trucks. A survey has detected about 64,000 male moths in Indiana. Real infestation consist of about 2.5 million moths per acre.

Inns at State Parks. Jerry Pagac, Director, DNR Division of State Parks and Reservoirs, provided the Committee with an overview of the direction that the DNR wishes to pursue in regard to the maintenance and rehabilitation of state parks. The state maintains 115 cabins; 62 are available all year and 53 provide seasonal lodging. State park inns provide 614 rooms. The number of rooms available places Indiana third in the nation. Only Ohio and Kentucky have more inn rooms. The state has not expanded the number of lodges in about 40 years. (Although Fort Harrison has been added, facilities at the Fort do not qualify as inns.) The state has expanded the number of rooms offered at Potowatomie. The state issued bonds to pay for the expansion; however, bonding to construct an inn is not economically feasible. Six inns are located in southern Indiana whereas only one is located in the northern part of the state.

Gary Mill, Deputy Director, Inns and Concessions, DNR, reported on the privatization of state parks. DNR would be opposed to privatization unless private owners could guarantee the construction and maintenance of an inn that would be comparable to existing state park inns. No developers have recently expressed an interest in constructing an inn at a state park. A new inn would cost an estimated \$10 to \$11 million. This estimate includes costs for the inn only and does not consider infrastructure and operating costs. No new inns are planned, and the DNR has placed strong emphasis on bringing existing properties up to standards. With respect to operating costs, all of the lodges run a profit as long as competitive rates are maintained. Occupancy rates run at about 68%, which is comparable to rates in the industry. Some sites are more popular than others. Many hotel companies would like to have occupancy rates comparable to those of the state park inns.

Clean Water Indiana. Krista Jones with the Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Steve Grabber from DeKalb County provided the Committee with an overview of how conservation districts are using state funding. Ms. Jones noted that Clean Water Indiana builds on the successes of the T by 2000 program. The primary purpose of the T by 2000 program was to keep soil out of the water and on the land. For every \$1 spent on saving the soil, the state saves \$5 in remediation costs. Private land owners volunteer to participate in the program. The state appropriated \$10,000 for each conservation district within the state. As Mr. Grabber explained, the appropriation allowed districts to generate additional revenues for conservation purposes from other sources. The program is a cost-share program that provides farmers with money to implement conservation practices on the land.

Next Meeting Dates. The next two Committee meetings were tentatively scheduled for September 14 and 15 at McCormick's Creek State Park and October 29 and 30 at Spring Mill State Park.

Approval of the Minutes. The Committee approved the minutes to the July 28, 1998, meeting.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.